

upgrading the Nation's highways, railways and aviation infrastructure in an era of necessary budget constraint will be especially difficult and will require vision and leadership.

Above all, the new Secretary's top priority must be protecting public safety in all modes of transportation. And, he must apply himself to prioritizing national needs and eliminating unjustified programs so that limited resources can flow to the Nation's most pressing requirements according to merit and need. Achieving these lofty goals will take a Secretary who can say no, as well as yes, and who can keep an unflinching eye on the interests of the country rather than on politics.

Mr. Slater, assured us that he understands the magnitude of the responsibilities awaiting the new Secretary, and is qualified and eager to take them on. Having questioned and examined this nominee, and given his track record of public service, the committee trusts and believes that is so. I urge my colleagues to confirm Rodney Slater, and we look forward to working with him to best serve the transportation needs of our Nation.

I ask for the yeas and nays on this vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. HOLLINGS. If my colleague would yield.

Mr. MCCAIN. I am happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to extend—

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, under the previous order, we were supposed to vote at 3 o'clock. That is my understanding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That was the agreement.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I yield back remaining time.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Rodney E. Slater, of Arkansas, to be Secretary of Transportation? On this question the yeas and nays have been ordered and the clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Utah [Mr. BENNETT] and the Senator from South Carolina [Mr. THURMOND] are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 6 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Abraham	Bingaman	Bumpers
Akaka	Bond	Burns
Allard	Boxer	Byrd
Ashcroft	Breaux	Campbell
Baucus	Brownback	Chafee
Biden	Bryan	Cleland

Coats	Harkin	Moseley-Braun
Cochran	Hatch	Moynihan
Collins	Helms	Murkowski
Conrad	Hollings	Murray
Coverdell	Hutchinson	Nickles
Craig	Hutchison	Reed
D'Amato	Inhofe	Reid
Daschle	Inouye	Robb
DeWine	Jeffords	Roberts
Dodd	Johnson	Rockefeller
Domenici	Kempthorne	Roth
Dorgan	Kennedy	Santorum
Durbin	Kerrey	Sarbanes
Enzi	Kerry	Sessions
Faircloth	Kohl	Shelby
Feingold	Kyl	Smith, Bob
Feinstein	Landrieu	Smith, Gordon
Ford	Lautenberg	H.
Frist	Leahy	Snowe
Glenn	Levin	Specter
Gorton	Lieberman	Stevens
Graham	Lott	Thomas
Gramm	Lugar	Thompson
Grams	Mack	Torricelli
Grassley	McCain	Warner
Gregg	McConnell	Wellstone
Hagel	Mikulski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Bennett Thurmond

The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. KERRY. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair notes that under the previous order, the President shall be notified of the confirmation of the nomination of Rodney Slater.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, Rodney Earl Slater is the right choice to become the next U.S. Secretary of Transportation. He has earned the unanimous vote by which he was confirmed. He has taken a remarkable path from a childhood of poverty to being selected to head the \$39 billion Department of Transportation. His hard work and talents have proven invaluable to every effort he has undertaken.

Rodney was born in 1955 in the dirt-poor Mississippi Delta. His first taste of hard work came early, when as a boy he picked cotton and peaches. He was recruited to play football at Eastern Michigan University, rising to become co-captain of the team.

His performance in speech class so impressed his professor that he persuaded him to join the college's debate team. He went on to become a national finalist in debate competitions. The coach of his college debate team described him well: "I knew way back then that here was a very disciplined, goal-oriented young man who was driven by his own competitiveness. He wasn't competing against other students. He was competing against his own measure of success."

Rodney Slater went on to an outstanding career of public service. He served several years in the Arkansas State Attorney General's Office. After 4 years as an assistant to then-Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, he directed government relations for Arkansas State University.

In 1987, he was appointed to the powerful Arkansas State Highway Commis-

sion, making him the first African-American to hold the job. Five years later, he was promoted to chair the commission.

As Federal Highway Administrator since 1993, Mr. Slater has managed a \$20 billion annual budget in an agency with 3,500 employees and offices in every State. He tackled the politically difficult task of putting together the National Highway System, a 160,000-mile network of roadways. Stitching together that system involved painstaking negotiations with 50 State governments, regional transportation agencies, and city governments. Despite these difficulties, he won praise from all sides for his candor, political skills, and ability to work within the system to get things done.

Rodney Slater's nomination has drawn wide and bipartisan support. As President Clinton put it, he "was recommended by more people from more places in more ways for this job than any person for any position I have ever seen." He has won praise from leaders from both parties and both Houses of Congress. Senator JOHN WARNER, who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Transportation Subcommittee, described him best as "an effective partner with Congress."

As a true Arkansas traveler, Rodney has demonstrated he understands rural transportation needs. He has certainly become a good friend of South Dakota. When we needed help, in good times and bad, we knew we could count on him. South Dakotans are deeply grateful for his assistance, which we will never forget.

The nomination of Rodney Slater validates a life of hard work. He has earned this nomination. From his roots in rural Arkansas, he worked his way through college and law school. Here in Washington, he has rebuilt and expanded our Nation's highways and linked isolated communities to jobs and opportunities. He has built bridges both of steel and of goodwill to bring people closer together. He is the right person to help us meet the many transportation challenges we face as we enter the 21st century.

I supported Rodney Slater's nomination with enthusiasm. He fully deserved the unanimous vote by which he was confirmed.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will return to legislative session.

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the recess be delayed in order for Senator GRAHAM of Florida and Senator SESSIONS of Alabama and Senator GRAMS of Minnesota

to speak, and following their remarks the Senate stand in recess under the previous order.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I have a little speech I would like to make on a non-germane matter. It will take me maybe 15 minutes.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I amend the request for the Senators that I mentioned, Senators GRAHAM of Florida, GRAMS of Minnesota, Senator SESSIONS, and the Senator from West Virginia to be able to speak, and that we stand in recess under the previous order after those speeches.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. I further ask unanimous consent that when the Senate reconvenes at 4 p.m. today—and it looks like there may actually, in view of the speeches to be given there, not be much of a recess at all, but at approximately 4 p.m. Senator DURBIN will be recognized to offer an amendment to the pending constitutional amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. For the information of all Senators, the Senator from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN] will offer this amendment when the Senate reconvenes after our conference. He will then debate his amendment throughout the remainder of today's session as long as he needs. It is my understanding that Senator DURBIN will be willing then to vote in relation to his amendment on Monday, February 10, at 5 p.m.

I wish to say that we had been hoping maybe we did not need to have that vote, but in view of the fact that we are not scheduled to be in session next Friday and the funeral services are scheduled for Thursday for Ambassador Harriman, we do need to get as much work done as we can on Monday. So we will look toward having this vote at 5 o'clock on Monday and then votes early Tuesday morning, and continue on through the remainder of the week to accomplish as much as we can in terms of taking up amendments on the constitutional amendment and also confirmations that we hope to be able to move. We think we will have a couple more perhaps that we will be able to vote on in the next week.

So with that in mind, I would like to announce there will be no further votes today and the next rollcall vote is expected to occur at approximately 5 p.m. on Monday, February 10.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, will the majority leader yield for a question?

Mr. LOTT. I will be pleased to yield to the Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. FORD. It appears that some of the nominees may not get out until Wednesday or so of next week without any problems but just because of when the next committee meeting will occur. Is it the majority leader's intention that if they get out, say, unanimously, without any opposition, and

have very little opposition, if any, here, we might waive the time and go ahead and try to vote before we leave here next week?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, as we have done on other nominees we have voted on, it would be our intent to do that. We want to get as many of them done as we can next week. We hope that perhaps we will reach a point where we can vote on the U.N. Ambassador's position, and we think there may be another one ready.

Mr. FORD. Secretary of Energy.

Mr. LOTT. All right. So if any of those will be cleared, we will try to get those up Thursday.

Mr. FORD. The only reason I asked, there will be kind of a time crunch, and I wanted others to understand we might get the committees to move their hearings up a day.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the Senate will be in session on Friday of this week for debate on the pending balanced budget constitutional amendment. However, no votes will occur during Friday's session. It is my understanding that Senator WELLSTONE will be in position on Monday to offer two amendments to the balanced budget issue. It will be my intent to schedule those votes to occur after the weekly luncheons on Tuesday, February 11, somewhere between 2:15 and 3 o'clock.

I thank all Senators for their cooperation.

I yield the floor, Mr. President.

#### BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Senate continued with the consideration of the joint resolution.

Mr. GRAHAM addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAMS). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. GRAHAM. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, we as a Nation have come to an important crossroads in our history. We must decide whether or not we should alter our supreme and most respected document, the U.S. Constitution, to establish the principle of a balanced Federal budget.

As we all know, regrettably our Nation is deeply in debt and goes more so each year. The budget deficit has become a permanent fixture of our Nation's fiscal policy. While there are those who say we can without a constitutional amendment balance the budget, recent history raises serious doubts.

Mr. President, I should like to humanize this issue by putting it in the context of a family, my family. My father was born in Croswell, MI, in 1885—February 10, 1885, to be exact. When he was born, the national debt, after almost 100 years of American history, after having purchased Louisiana from the French, having fought the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, we had accumulated a total national debt on the day my dad was born of \$1.6 billion. If you took the population of the United States in February of 1885 and

divided it by that \$1.6 billion national debt, my father came into the Earth owing \$28. That was his share of the national debt.

I was born in November 1936. On that date, the national debt was \$33.8 billion. Between my dad's birth and my birth, we had fought the Spanish-American War, the First World War, and suffered a deep depression, which we still were in the midst of on the date of my birth. On that day, dividing the then national debt by the then population, I owed \$264. That was my indebtedness to the Nation at the time of my arrival.

My first child was born in January 1963. When Gwen was born, the national debt was \$310 billion. In 1963. That was not very long ago in the scale of life. And my daughter owed \$1,640. That was her share of the national debt as recently as January of 1963. And 27 years after her birth, my daughter Gwen had a daughter, Sarah. Sarah was born in 1990, and upon her birth the national debt, if you can believe it, had soared from \$310 billion 27 years earlier to \$3.2 trillion when my first granddaughter, Sarah Logan, was born. Sarah came into this world with a proportion of the national debt of \$12,830.

Since Sarah's birth, I have had seven other grandchildren, the most recent born in 1995. When those four grandchildren, triplet granddaughters and a grandson, Mark Ernest, were born, the national debt had soared again now to \$4.9 trillion, or they came into the Earth with a indebtedness of \$18,932.

Between my father's birth, with a \$28 indebtedness, to my youngest grandchild's birth, \$18,932 per person is what we have inflicted upon our children, our grandchildren, and generations beyond.

Such history has brought me to the conclusion that if we are to reverse this profligate policy, if we are to begin to return to the principles of our parents and grandparents, we, unlike they, must have the discipline of a constitutional amendment which will require that each generation assume responsibility for its indebtedness.

I make these observations not without recognition that we have made considerable progress in recent years in terms of gaining some control over our deficit. America reached its all-time high, in terms of an annual deficit, in 1992. In 1992 the national deficit soared to over \$290 billion in that one year. It took us 100 years to get to \$1.6 billion. In one year we had a deficit of \$290 billion.

This year, the estimate is that our deficit will be \$107 billion. So we have made substantial progress and I believe that President Clinton and the Members of Congress during this period deserve some recognition for the fact that we have pulled that line of deficits in a downward position, albeit still, each year, contributing substantially to our accumulated national debt.

But, despite this progress, current projections forecast large deficits into